

HCS HB 1877 -- PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BENEFITS

SPONSOR: Largent (Sommer)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 10 to 3.

This substitute specifies that a recipient of state Temporary Assistance for Need Families (TANF) benefits who is found to have made a cash withdrawal at any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment with an electronic benefit transfer transaction, after an administrative hearing conducted by the Department of Social Services, must be declared ineligible for benefits for three years from the date of the administrative hearing decision. Other members of the household who remain eligible must continue to receive TANF benefits as protective or vendor payments to a third-party payee. Any person who, in good faith, reports a suspected violation cannot be held civilly or criminally liable.

The Department of Social Services is required to implement and maintain policies and practices which prevent a TANF electronic benefit transaction in any liquor store, casino, gambling casino, gambling establishment, or any retail establishment that provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment.

On or before December 31, 2013, the department must submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly detailing the policies and practices implemented in accordance with these provisions and specified federal requirements. The department must report Missouri's implementation of the policies and practices to the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services as required under federal rule within two years of the enactment of the federal law.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Net Cost on General Revenue Fund of Unknown in FY 2013, FY 2014 and FY 2015. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill prohibits a TANF recipient from using his or her benefit card at any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment. Currently, a recipient can withdraw cash from any ATM machine.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Sommer.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that the state should not pass a bill that is narrower than the federal law.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Gaming Association.